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 Reviewed by JSB/mm DATE 3/30/75 SECRET
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 From JDDA

EXCISE

RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ DATE 3/30/75
 TS AUTH. REASON(S)
 ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
 DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☐ OFFICE MEMORANDUM
 RELEASE DENIED IN PART
 PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS B1(a)(3), (a)(5)

January 3, 1956

SUBJECT: Renewal of Dhahran Airfield Agreement.

MY DIARY OF PERTINENT EVENTS

October 4-December 31, 1955

(Prepared for my next audience with HM King Saud)

Oct. 4. Prince Faisal sent me his note announcing SAG's intention to renegotiate the DAF Agreement. (Note: I wired its substance to Washington in Embtel 154, October 6, and forwarded its text by despatch 44, November 11.)

Oct. 17/18. I had two long discussions with Khalid Bey regarding the Russian proposals to exchange diplomatic missions and supply arms. Speaking officially for my Government, I said inter alia:

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1) That USG believed Russian objectives were to incite an arms race and gain influence in the area.

2) That USG wished to continue to cooperate in building Saudi Arabian defense, including supply of arms under existing agreements.

3) That USG had received my telegram of October 6 re DAF and, after studying the note itself, would communicate regarding it with SAG.

Oct. 19. Khalid Bey showed me the texts of two telegrams he had that day sent to His Majesty. The first conveyed my official statements, the second my personal query.

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Same evening, I dined with Yusuf Zeinal in honor of the King and was able to arrange with His Majesty for the visit of Codel-Price (5-member Armed Services Sub-Committee) for November 10-13. HM seemed pleased with a report he had had of General Schlatter's meeting with Prince Misha'al.

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Nov. 10. Codel-Price arrived, and I gave its members a general briefing with emphasis on the Soviet arms offer, Buraimi, DAF and Aramco.

Nov. 11. With Codel-Price, I called on Prince Faisal, then flew Dhahran and visited DAF and Aramco. Our conversation with Prince Faisal brought out the following points:

He recognized a long tradition of friendly Saudi-American relations; but too often effective cooperation had been lacking. This was our fault.

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Nov. 12. I visited Riyadh with Codel-Price (see mytel 219, November 15). During our audience, His Majesty brought out the following points:

Renewal of DAF Agreement. He wished us to go on using DAF but "it should be as friends helping each other"; he had already sent me the "formula" he had in mind.

His General Policy. He was guardian of Holy Shrines of Islam. He wished "both to fend off danger and maintain a "neutral position"; this would be to American advantage also, because the supply of oil would continue." (Note: This was the first time His Majesty had ever mentioned "neutral position" to me. It may have been formulated for his forthcoming visit to India, November 26-December 12.)

Nov. 12. His Majesty received me alone (with Muhammad Effendi and Major Hefling) in private audience. A resume, by subject, based on Major Hefling's notes and my memory, follows:

Neutrality. Having in mind His Majesty's remark of the previous evening I commented that I hoped he would not be influenced by Nehru, as the "Prophet of Neutrality", to join "the new faith". He answered that he had always the interests of the Arabs and Moslems at heart and would not act "like the extremists". I commented that it seemed inconceivable that "Militant Islam" could be neutralist any more than it could be Communist.

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I recalled that His Majesty had told the Congressmen he had sent me the "formula" he had in mind for renewal of the DAF Agreement. Did His Majesty, I asked, approve the form in which I had recited it two days earlier when calling with them on Prince Faisal? I had loaned my memo of that meeting to Jamal Hussaini who had told me he had read it to His Majesty before the Congressmen were received in audience.

His Majesty answered that he was in full accord with my presentation.

I recalled, also in this connection, that I and our Military Mission had worked hard to meet His Majesty's wishes that, working with his officers, we develop a "Five-Year Plan" within the capabilities of the country as we saw them. I felt the result was sound and feasible, and I understood His Majesty had approved it, at least in principle. I wished, therefore, with His Majesty's approval, to use it as the basis for any discussions I might have with Khalid.

His Majesty indicated his concurrence but.

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Exchange of Ambassadors with Russia. His Majesty's last comment led me to seek re-assurance that during his visit to India, where Bulganin and Krushchev too were to be Nehru's guests, he would not agree to this exchange.

We discussed the matter at some length along lines of earlier discussions; and, on taking my leave thereafter, I felt confident His Majesty would take no decision in the matter before hearing further from Washington. (See mytels 're Codel-Price visit.)

Nov. 17. The semi-official Mecca newspaper "Bilad al-Saudiyyah" published an ANA (Arab News Agency) story with Cairo date-line to the effect that, in the exchange of complimentary telegrams between Voroshilov and King Saud on the occasion of the second anniversary (November 12) of His Majesty's Accession, Voroshilov had proposed and the King had agreed that their Ambassadors in Cairo should discuss supply of arms and exchange of resumption of diplomatic relations.

Nov. 18/19. As, in the light of His Majesty's remarks to me in Riyadh, I could not believe this report to be true, I had the Embassy's Arab Consultant, Muhammad Effendi Massoud, suggest to Prince Faisal that a denial be published. Elsewise, I said, my government might find it difficult, because of the generally recognized semi-official character of the "Bilad", to pursue the matters which His Majesty had discussed with me. This suggestion and comment was communicated by Prince Faisal to His Majesty.

Nov. 20/21. Two denials, the second official, were published in the "Bilad", and its responsible editor was dismissed by order of His Majesty. Prince Faisal's view was that the ANA news story had been "planted" with the object of damaging US-Saudi relations.

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I assured Khalid I would report his message to the Department (as I did in Dmbtel 235, November 23); and I told him of Mr. Eli Stevens' expected visit on November 23/24.

Nov. 23. I briefed Mr. Stevens thoroughly on the general situation in Saudi Arabia, on the events recapitulated in this memorandum and their background, and on the Five-Year Plan (a summary of which I had prepared, with Colonels Bothwell and Nix, especially for our meeting).

Nov. 24. I received at noon Deptel 251 of November 23 replying to mytels 233 and 234. It authorized me to assure His Majesty that USG valued his friendship; appreciated his firm action in denying reports concerning arms transactions with Russia; and would make every effort to continue to contribute towards strengthening his Kingdom. (Note: This message was delivered to His Majesty November 25, see below.)

Deptel 251 also informed me of the status of Saudi requests to purchase arms from USG. Unfortunately, for my suggestion as to immediate shipment of tanks, the Saudi Embassy in Washington had requested thirty days extension of the letter-of-offer due to "unavoidable delay in transfer of funds."

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I at once made an appointment to see Prince Faisal urgently. Mr. Stevens accompanied me, and we found, on arrival, that, Khalid Bey was in attendance. I gave His Highness the substance of the Department's message and we arranged that Muhammad Effendi should fly the same night to Dhahran to convey it personally to the King who would be leaving for India before dawn on the morning of November 26. (Note: Mr. Stevens returned to Dhahran by the same plane.)

I also showed Prince Faisal my summary of the Five-Year Plan, explained its salient features and arranged to send him an Arabic translation. (Note: In mytel 242 of November 30, I reported these salient features to the Department.)

We spoke, too, in this connection of His Majesty's "formula" for renewal of the DAF Agreement; and Khalid voiced the hope that, under His Highness's guidance, a new basis for Saudi-American confidence and cooperation would be built thereon. My summary of the Five-Year Plan, with its listing of the arms and equipment needs by years and their estimated cost, would, we agreed, be helpful in discussing how USG could be of assistance in strengthening the Saudi Army and Air Force.

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Nov. 25. In Dhahran the King received Mr. Stevens and Muhammad Effendi who gave him my message. His Majesty considered it to be "encouraging" and, he hoped, "the beginning of action which would increase cooperation and strengthen friendship between the two countries by deeds." [redacted] were reported in mytels 242 as briefly as follows:

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Nov. 29. In New Delhi, King Saud had a long talk with Ambassador Cooper (Delhi tel. 1079, December 1, to Department) in which His Majesty reviewed these and related subjects, notably Palestine, the Baghdad Pact and Communism. His desire was to hold always to the United States and against the Communist countries. "We will not," he said, "permit one Communist in Saudi Arabia."

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Dec. 1. I called on Deputy Foreign Minister Yusuf Vasin at his request. It was our first meeting since his return from Geneva.

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There was no longer, any question of grant
military and economic aid. I hoped, Shaikh Yusuf, would
recognize that "the days of the Kashgul" were over. I had
told all this to Mr. Stevens and he, I believed, was prepared
to work with us to realize His Majesty's formula. B1(a)(5)

(Note: Shaikh Yusuf and I are still friends, though
the atmosphere was tense as I spoke. B1(a)(5)

Later I told him how much I appreciated
his friendship and knowledge and said I hoped he would be
able to participate in the discussions I was to have with
Khalid Bey.)

Dec. 3. I received Depcirtel 368 and Deptel 264, both dated
December 2, the first denying the King's report re our policy
towards Israel and the second re Buraimi. On December 5 I
sent their substance to Prince Faisal by Muhammad Effendi
who arranged that I call on His Highness the following day.

Dec. 6. General Schlatter flew to Jidda for his monthly meeting
with me. He read my telegrams re DAF since the visit of
Codel-Price; and I took him with me when calling on Prince
Faisal.

There, after discussing my message, I was able to refer
again to DAF, the Five-Year Plan and His Majesty's formula and
to express the hope that it would lead us to a new constructive
basis for Saudi-American friendship.

He replied that he, too, hoped a mutually agreeable solution
would be found, and we agreed to talk again after he had studied
my resume of the Five-Year Plan. (Note: An Arabic translation
was taken him December 9 by Muhammad Effendi.)

The only new point I gathered was that His Highness "had
hoped to reach agreement in two months." I replied that I
expected preliminary reply to my telegrams shortly.

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Dec. 8. I received Assistant Secretary George Allen's letter of November 28 telling me it might be desirable for me to visit Washington on consultation soon after the New Year.

Dec. 10. I received Deptel 260, December 8 directing formal acknowledgment of the Saudi Note of October 4 re DAF and authorizing me to inform Prince Faisal verbally that I had informed USG of His Majesty's suggestion as to the role it might play in realizing the Five-Year Plan and that the pertinent Departments of USG are currently studying the Plan.

Dec. 12. I sent the prescribed acknowledgment, saying USG will willingly discuss continuation of DAF Agreement and will immediately notify SAQ so soon as it completes the necessary preliminary studies. At the same time I had Muhammad Effendi inform His Highness verbally in the sense of the reference telegram.

Dec. 13. I sent the Department three telegrams (numbers 260, 261 and 262) covering the following aspects of the matter:

260) Reported above action and my views on Saudi "intended aim" in desiring renegotiation of DAF Agreement.

261) Reported Prince Faisal's comment to Muhammad Effendi when he delivered my note of acknowledgment, notably that SAQ is awaiting reply to His Majesty's "formula".

262) Answered Mr. Allen's letter, saying I should be glad to return on consultation and asking if he wished me endeavor obtain clear-cut written statement of that "formula".

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The second telegram, number 281, suggested that I:
a) inform His Majesty the Department had received Ambassador Cooper's report of his audience in New Delhi; b) repeat the message I had already given Prince Faisal (see December 12, above) re our desire to discuss the DAF Agreement at an appropriate time and to assist Saudi Arabia in building its defenses through procurement and training assistance; and c) explain again the reasons for our support of the Baghdad Pact.

Dec. 19. The Egyptian Ambassador called on me in response to a suggestion I had made several days earlier that we find occasion at his convenience to discuss the Saudi Five-Year Plan in the light of Egyptian-Saudi-Syrian plans to establish a common defense against Israel with joint General Staff, financing and, as I presumed, arms program.

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The Ambassador appeared to receive this exposition sympathetically, and he studied with considerable care my two draft sheets summarizing the major factors and costs of the Five-Year Plan.

Dec. 22. Prince Faisal, who had been summoned to join His Majesty in Riyadh on December 18, returned to Jidda. The same afternoon I sent Muhammad Effendi to ask if I might call to consider with His Highness how best I might deliver Mr. Dulles' personal message to His Majesty.

Muhammad returned to say Prince Faisal wished to see me the following afternoon: he had himself been charged by His Majesty with seeing me

Dec. 23. At my meeting with Prince Faisal I gave him Mr. Dulles' message and was able to make the obvious points set forth in Deptel 281. His reply is reported in mytel 280 of December 24. Two of his remarks bear repeating in this memorandum:

The United States has never been aggressive. That is why we still, despite its Palestine policy, hope to maintain our friendship and build cooperation designed to further common interests.

It was in this spirit that SAC viewed the matter of the renewal of the DAF Agreement and hoped accord could be reached within the framework of His Majesty's formula; "we are," he said, "awaiting the United States Government's reply."

Dec. 24. I received Deptels 302 and 303 of December 23. The first was from Mr. Allen informing me that the Department believed best I remain close to the situation here for the time being, but would continue to consider having me return for consultation prior to the opening of formal DAF negotiations.

The second wire, number 303, referring to mytels 260, 261 and 262 should be read in full. Besides citing the Wheelus Field precedent, its noteworthy points were:

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The Department believes that no formula should be proposed by either USA or SAG at this time.

It is, however, willing to include in its present studies any suggestions King Saud may put forward.

The ultimate United States role should be in accord with current United States legislation.

Dec. 27. Prince Faisal asked me to call to receive His Majesty's answer to Mr. Dulles' message (see December 14/23 items; above). It expressed "great thanks" and desire to "solve this problem by peaceful means." Faisal added that "the situation is so delicate, almost anything can happen." (See mytel 282, December 28.

I then raised the subject of renegotiation of the DAF Agreement and, with Deptel 303 in mind, made the following principal points (see my memo of December 28):

We were in agreement in principle as to the basis for negotiations, i.e. the establishment of a firm foundation for future US-Saudi relations.

Further, His Majesty wished USG to continue to use DAF; and USG wished to do so.

His Majesty's suggested formula had been conceived as a possible way to cut through the red tape of IDAF legislation to achieve those ends.

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This formula was being studied in Washington. I had recommended it strongly, but it might well be that the experts there prefer some alternative way to reach the same end.

Or they might even prefer to open negotiations without any prior agreed formula.

If either of these latter were the case, I hoped it would be agreeable to His Highness.

Meanwhile His Highness might: a) select the Saudi negotiators and brief them on the Saudi position; and b) arrange that appointees of Prince Mish'al and General Schlatter work up a careful summary of the Five-Year Plan as it stands today.

Prince Faisal indicated general concurrence in my exposition (but see his several comments as set forth in my memorandum of December 26).

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